

## IWW CONVENTION STRESSES SOLIDARITY



### SURVIVORS OF 44th IWW CONVENTION.....

### HORMEL AND UFCW SETTLE, BUT.....

On August 29th the George A. Hormel Company and the United Food and Commercial Workers Union announced that they had reached agreement on a new four-year pact at Hormel's flagship plant in Austin, Minnesota, the site of a bitter year-long strike that began on August 17th, 1985. The agreement, which will coincide with similar three-year contracts at seven other Hormel locations, will raise base pay to \$10.70 an hour in the third year of the pact, and eliminate the two-tier wage system now in effect. (Hormel is now paying newly-hired scabs at the Austin plant \$9 and union scabs \$10 an hour.) Austin workers would also be eligible for any pay raises (or pay cuts?) received by workers at other Hormel plants when they re-negotiate after their three-year agreements expire in 1989. (The Austin workers will still have a year to go on their agreement. After that P-9 could negotiate a contract with the same expiration date as those of the other Hormel plants.)

While the new contract brings wages up to the 1982 level, plus a whopping one-cent raise, it does not guarantee the rehiring of the 700 workers who refused to knuckle under to UFCW pressure to end their strike.

The newly-hired scabs, 600 in all, are considered permanent replacements, and about 300 of them have applied to join the UFCW. About 500 P-9 members had returned to work in January. The UFCW is counting on business expansion to open up jobs for the displaced workers. In addition, safety and seniority provisions in the settlement are the same as those in the contract rejected by the Hormel workers last year and unilaterally implemented by the company.

So, while Hormel and the UFCW pat each other on the back for a job well done, some 700 strikers find themselves on the outside looking in. The North American Meatpackers Union (NAMPU), formed by P-9 die-hards after the UFCW took the local into receivership, considers the agreement temporary until its re-certification election settles the issue of who really represents the Austin workers. The Austin United Support Group also remains active in the fight to win strikers' jobs back, though it looks like the holdouts will not be recalled anytime soon, if at all.

Apparently, Hormel and the UFCW have agreed to sacrifice the dissidents in exchange for regaining wages lost in earlier concessions. Chuck Nyberg, Hormel senior vice-president and chief lawyer, made it quite clear that the company agreed to the higher pay and an end to the two-tier system to undercut local militants and bolster the position of the UFCW. Nyberg told the *Minnesota Star and Tribune* that Hormel was more willing to negotiate with the UFCW than with P-9's Jim Guyette because the international had a more-reasonable attitude. Here we have a clear example of collaboration at work.

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### .....REPRESSION IN BOLIVIA.....

The "democratic" government of Victor Paz Estensoro clamped a nationwide state of siege on Bolivia August 28th in a bid to stifle the growing opposition to the Government's austerity program.

At least 162 labor, political, and church leaders were detained, and the offices of the Bolivian Workers Central (COB) were occupied by troops. At least 100 of those arrested will be deported to jungle concentration camps. Troops also surround 7,000 miners from the town of Oruro, a mining area 150 miles from La Paz. The miners, accompanied by their families, were marching on the capital to protest the closing of their mine. The Government has already laid off 7,000 miners out of a workforce of 25,000, and at least 8,000 more are slated for the chopping block as the Government "re-structures" the State-owned mining industry, which has been devastated by the sharp decline in world tin prices.

The state of siege is clearly aimed at crushing the militant labor movement. The decree declared: "Since the Government decided to rehabilitate the state mining company there have been illegal strikes, the paralyzation of the cities of Oruro and Potosi, destruction of railroad

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31 delegates from Champaign-Urbana, Chicago, Minneapolis-Saint Paul, New York, Southeast Michigan, and Southwest Ohio participated in the IWW's 44th General Convention over the Labor Day weekend (August 30th and 31st).

The Convention opened with reports from delegates on activities in their areas ranging from strike-support solidarity actions with fellow workers in other countries to organizing drives and a host of other activities. A brief synopsis of these reports follows.

San Diego Wobs have been involved in a number of free-speech struggles and are meeting with workers facing massive pay cuts. Chicago GMB members recently joined Oscar Mayer and *Tribune* picket lines and engaged in actions on behalf of British and South African class-war prisoners, in the fight for a shorter workday, and against repression of the labor movement. Champaign fellow workers are involved in a weekly radio show that they hope to use as an organizing tool during the coming year. The Southeast Michigan GMB sponsored talks by labor activists from the Philippines, Poland, and South Africa, and engaged in a host of other actions including Coors boycott activities, organizing work, and contract negotiations. In Minneapolis the Twin Cities Branch has been especially active in P-9 strike support and distribution of IWW literature. It also reported on an IWW-organized janitorial co-operative now in its fifth year. The New York GMB hosted a regional picnic in August, and has been distributing IWW literature over the past year as well as adopting a P-9 family. The Southwest Ohio GMB reported on its successful prisoner-organizing efforts. The Tacoma-Olympia Branch sponsored talks by Solidarnosc activist Marek Garzdecki in addition to distributing a hundred copies monthly of the *IWW*, hosting a regional picnic, and doing support work for strikes and

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### STEEL LOCKOUT: 43 BUSTED IN GARY....

43 members of United Steelworkers of America Local 1066 were arrested Wednesday, September 3rd, in Gary, Indiana, charged with criminal trespass, and released on their own recognizance three and a half hours later. The arraignment was set for September 23rd.

The incident, a premeditated action by Local 1066, developed as 400 union members moved a picket line from a location well away from the Gary Works to a gate opening onto US Steel and Levy Company Incorporated, a slag-processing plant on USS grounds. Steelworkers blocked the gate and turned away four trucks attempting to enter. Six other trucks leaving the gate were stoned. A worker was arrested and charged with indecent exposure for "mooning" guards and company officials gathered at the gate. All those arrested work at the Sheet and Tin Mill of Gary Works.

Union officials said the picket line was moved because the original location did not permit effective picketing. "We believe that this property in front of the gate does not belong to US Steel," said Local 1066 Recording Secretary Robert Watson. "This will be a test to determine if we have the right to stand on this spot. We had to do it this way so the courts can decide."

On Thursday, September 4th, workers were ordered back to the original location of the picket line by Indiana State Police acting with the express encouragement

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### .....TENSION HIGH IN PAPER STRIKE.....

The strike of 1200 workers against the Boise Cascade Paper Group mill in Rumford, Maine (see the September *IWW*) is continuing as of this writing (September 9th) with no end in sight. Tensions remain high following three days of fruitless talks during the second week of August between Local 900 of the United Paperworkers International Union and Boise under orders from Maine Governor Joseph Brennan.

At those meetings the union made an offer to return to work under the old contract, leaving disputed issues up to binding arbitration; but Boise maintained its position that the old contract no longer existed and that the final offer it implemented in July is the one the union will have to live with. The company has also begun hiring

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## HORMEL, UFCW.....

In a related development, a federal arbitrator ordered Hormel to recall the 507 workers fired last winter for honoring the picket line set up by P-9 at their Ottumwa, Iowa plant. The company contended that the picket line was illegal, and therefore not protected by the contract.

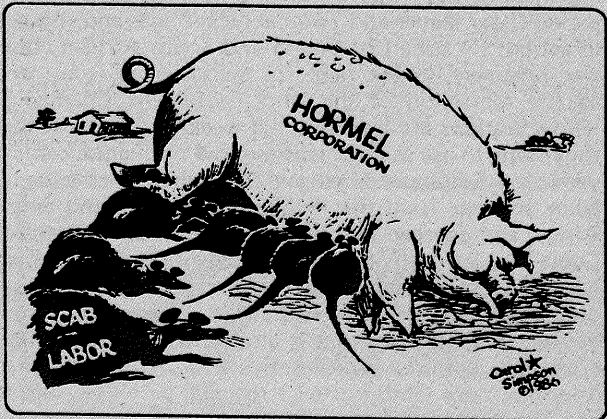
The arbitrators' decision required that the workers be called back by September 15th, but it is unlikely that they will ever be called back. Shortly after firing the 507 workers Hormel shut down the plant's slaughter operation, eliminating 300 jobs, and transferred some work to other plants. Hormel claims there are no longer jobs for the workers it fired.

To add insult to injury, an Iowa appeals court ruled that the fired workers were not eligible to collect unemployment benefits and should pay back benefits they have already received. This means the fired workers are facing bills of up to \$5,000 each.

Although Hormel and the UFCW have come to an agreement, the struggle against concessions and dictatorship in Austin is not over. Whatever "gains" were achieved by this agreement in terms of restoring wages lost in earlier concessionary bargaining are due to the militancy and solidarity of the Hormel strikers and their supporters in the labor movement, at which the UFCW bureaucrats sneered. We cannot forget the 700 Austin workers and 507 Ottumwa unionists who are out on the streets for practicing solidarity. Nor can we forget the 18 fighters still facing prosecution for defending their picket line.

The Austin battle has lit a spark. We must keep that spark alive and fan the flames of discontent.

Mike Hargis



## TWO OSCAR MAYER PLANTS SETTLE.....

On August 20th, the Oscar Mayer Food Corporation announced tentative contract agreements with 2300 union meatpackers in Madison, Wisconsin and Davenport, Iowa, raising hopes of a settlement with 685 Chicago workers who have been locked out by Oscar Mayer since July 21st. The proposed three-year agreement would raise the wages of United Food and Commercial Workers from the current \$10 an hour to \$10.70 over the life of the contract. The workers would receive an immediate increase of 25¢, with subsequent raises of 25¢ and 20¢. (Not much, but at least it's up and not down.) Workers would also gain modest increases in medical payments and the addition of a holiday: the day before Christmas.

Workers at Oscar Mayer in Chicago were locked out after rejecting the company's demand of a 10-month contract with wages frozen at \$10.67. The brief length of the company's demanded contract would have eliminated common expiration dates, putting the Chicago local at the disadvantage of having to negotiate while two of the company's other major plants would be well into their agreement.

The Chicago vote to reject was a key element in maintaining fairly-common expiration dates. Had the company not agreed to a deal with Madison/Davenport, said UFCW sources, it faced shutdown or marginal operation of nearly half its production capacity.

## CHICAGO OM SETTLES

Locked-out Oscar Mayer workers in Chicago voted August 29th to accept the \$10.67-an-hour wage freeze they had rejected June 21st. Their change of heart followed the ratification of three-year pacts by the Iowa and Wisconsin locals. This means that the 685 members of UFCW Local 100 will not have had a pay raise in nine years.

### RACISM AND EMPLOYMENT

These days, a black person is almost three times as likely to be unemployed as a white person. The employer of last resort, the shrinking public sector, has had a disproportionate effect on blacks. Some 29% of black women and 21% of black men have federal, state, or local government jobs, compared to 19% of white women and 14% of white men, and further cutbacks are on the way. The auto, apparel, lumber, and primary-metals industries, traditional hirers of black men, are continuing to decline. The service and clerical industries continue to employ many black women, though at lower wages than white women. And once unemployed, blacks have a lot harder time finding new jobs than whites. A Department of Labor study of dislocated workers found that of all workers who lost their jobs between January 1979 and January 1984, only 42% of black workers had found new jobs by 1984, compared to 63% of white workers.



"HOLD IT! THE GOVERNOR SAYS NO TRAINING EXERCISES NEAR RUMFORD. IT'S CONSIDERED A COMBAT ZONE."

## PAPER STRIKE.....

scabs to replace striking workers. Boise claims that 200 are already on the job, but the union says only 100 are working.

Militancy and solidarity remain high despite the injunction imposed by the courts and the attempts of the local police to enforce it. Police have regularly closed off a public road which passes in front of the main gate to prevent non-picketing strikers and supporters from gathering near the picket lines. Union members have compensated for these restrictions by moving their pickets to public roads leading to the mill and to scabs' homes. Numerous arrests have been made for criminal mischief, vandalism, and interfering with police.

There have also been a number of shooting incidents reported. One such incident involved a scab who quit his job at a factory in a nearby town, where he had 16 years' seniority, to steal a job at Boise. But after some unknown person or persons pumped buckshot into his car, he decided that job-stealing was not healthy and changed his mind about working at Boise. Other shots have been fired at the mill, and a Boise scabherder was hit in the foot by a ball bearing fired from a slingshot. Unionists wonder whether such incidents are being perpetrated by Boise security people to discredit the union.

Despite its claims to the contrary, Boise is obviously out to destroy the union, in fact if not juridically. Its insistence that its final offer is just that and that it intends to replace strikers is a grave challenge, not only to the 1200 members of Local 900, but to the entire labor movement. Boise's "modernization" is mainly a return to unlimited management rights.

The Rumford workers need our support. Send messages of solidarity and donations to UPIU Local 900, 108 Congress Street, Rumford, Maine 04276.



## BOLIVIA.....

links, the occupation of working centers with the possibility that conflict will be aggravated by the mobilization of miners to La Paz." The week before the COB organized a general strike to protest the Government's economic policies and to demand the withdrawal of US troops stationed in the country to carry out raids on cocaine producers.

Given the sorry state of the official economy and massive unemployment, thousands of workers and peasants depend on the underground economy for their livelihood—particularly on the cocaine trade, which brings in \$600,000,000 annually compared to \$500,000,000 brought into the country by legal exports.

## STEEL.....

of Governor Robert Orr. "We don't like losing ground," said Local 1066 President Cary Kranz, the first person to be arrested on Wednesday. "I don't like moving backward and forward. I like moving forward."

In related developments, Indiana steelworkers are mounting a petition campaign to obtain unemployment benefits which have not been granted to them, and the Gary City Council has passed a resolution requesting a moratorium on evictions of locked-out workers for the duration of the conflict. The Council also passed a resolution asking that workers be given special consideration on loans and be allowed to make interest-only payments on credit accounts. The practical end-result of these resolutions is uncertain, but they indicate the widespread community support workers enjoy. Finally, there will be a Solidarity Rally in Gary September 27th at the Genesis Center Plaza, 4th and Broadway, beginning at 2 pm.

### USWA VERSUS USS

#### PARTIES INVOLVED:

USS unit of USX Corporation  
(Formerly US Steel Corporation)  
United Steel Workers of America  
(Locked out as of June 30th, 1986)  
Local 1014 (3400 members)  
Local 1066 (2625 members)  
Local 2695 (240 members)  
Local 2697 (5 members)  
Local 3008 (60 members)  
Local 3061 (40 members)

#### PAYROLL LOSS:

\$808,000 a day

### US WORKERS WIN TWO LOCKOUT RULINGS

In mid-August, the August 1st work stoppage at USX Corporation's steel mills was ruled a lockout, not a strike, by labor departments in Pennsylvania and Minnesota, entitling USX steelworkers in those states to collect unemployment benefits. The rulings affect some 6200 United Steelworkers in Pennsylvania and 1300 in Minnesota.

According to a company spokesperson, USX (formerly US Steel) will appeal the decisions. The company has opposed the granting of unemployment benefits in at least eight states where it has plants. USX has also been contesting in several states the award of benefits to steelworkers laid off before August 1st, as the company was preparing for a possible strike. In Alabama and Texas, however, those workers have been ruled eligible for benefits.

If the company's appeals are unsuccessful, it will ease the financial burden on the workers. The steel union's 210-million-dollar strike fund pays \$60 a week to local unions for each steelworker on the picket line for the locals to distribute; unemployment benefits in Pennsylvania average \$192 a week. According to union spokespersons, the Federal Agriculture Department has said food stamps would be available to any union member who can prove need.

### LTV LAYS OFF 2,000

The LTV Steel Company, which filed for protection from its creditors in July under Chapter 11 of the federal bankruptcy laws, announced several plant shutdowns in mid-August that resulted in the layoff of over 2,000 workers. The plants closed include a hot rolled-bar plant in Chicago; cold finished-bar plants in Hammond, Indiana and Youngstown, Ohio; and a seamless-pipe mill in Campbell, Ohio. Ralph Pallente, president of United Steelworkers Local 1462 in Youngstown, attributed the closing to bad management decisions.

Later in August, representatives of the 78,000 retired LTV steelworkers started a petition drive to retain their health benefits. On July 17th, LTV informed its retirees that it was ending their health benefits. Steelworkers at LTV's plant in Indiana Harbor, just south of Chicago, struck and successfully forced LTV to agree to continue health-care benefits for six more months. The retirees are pressing Judge Lifland, the federal judge in New York who is overseeing a re-organization plan for LTV, to name a representative of the retired steelworkers to the committee that represents LTV's unsecured creditors, so the retirees can fight to retain their benefits after the six months are up.



What is Estensoro's payoff for crushing the workers? The World Bank has granted the Bolivian Government a 50-year, 55-million-dollar loan, and the International Monetary Fund has offered a standby 50-million-dollar loan and is expected to follow this up with another \$70,000,000—all in the hope of reviving the bankrupt capitalist economy. Of course, any starving workers who might object to being sacrificed for the benefit of foreign and domestic capital cannot be tolerated. The upper and middle classes must have their prosperity, no matter who suffers. So much for "democracy".



# STRAIGHT **SOLIDARITY** AHEAD

## IWW CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS.....

### HORMEL

Resolved: That the IWW re-affirms its solidarity with the striking Austin, Minnesota meatpackers and with the Ottumwa, Iowa lockout victims and endorses a boycott of all Hormel products. That the IWW condemns the UFCW's treacherous class-collaborationist role in this crucial fight, and calls on all transport and distribution workers to refuse to handle Hormel products. That \$250 be donated to the Austin Emergency Appeal to aid meatpackers in meeting defense and relief costs. That the General Executive Board be authorized to allocate an additional \$100 to Ottumwa lockout victims if the arbitration ruling ordering their re-instatement is not promptly implemented. That both allocations be made out of General Defense funds, and that the General Defense Committee further make its mailing list(s) available to the Austin Emergency Appeal should they be interested.

### BOLIVIAN WORKERS' SOLIDARITY

Resolved: That the IWW condemns the Bolivian Government's anti-labor policies—in particular, the ongoing state of siege, the imprisonment of union activists, the use of the army to suppress strikes and demonstrations, and the decision to shut down many of Bolivia's tin mines, throwing tens of thousands of miners out of work. That the IWW stands in solidarity with the COB (Bolivian Workers' Center) in its resistance to these anti-labor austerity schemes and military union-busting, and fully supports the COB's demand that all US troops currently stationed in Bolivia be immediately withdrawn. We further call for an end to all US military "aid" to Bolivia, and urge that Bolivia's foreign debt (a major cause of its deep economic crisis) be repudiated. We demand the immediate release of all workers arrested in the recent repression of the labor movement. The GST is to send a letter of protest to the president of Bolivia.

### ATTACKS AGAINST THE CNT

Resolved: That the IWW strongly protests the Spanish Government's most-recent attack against our fellow workers of the CNT (National Confederation of Labor)—in particular the recent court ruling denying the CNT the right to use its own name, the continued withholding of the CNT's patrimony, and governmental efforts to intervene in CNT internal affairs. That the IWW re-affirms its fraternal relations with the CNT and the AIT (International Workers' Association), to which it is affiliated, and directs the General Secretary-Treasurer to write the Spanish Government and courts demanding that this most-recent outrage be overturned and that government persecution of and discrimination against the CNT be halted. That \$70 from IWW General Defense Committee funds be added to CNT assessment funds on hand and immediately forwarded to the CNT to aid in the present crisis. The Convention also encourages IWW members to purchase CNT assessment stamps.

## AROUND OUR UNION

### THREE WOBS ON TRIAL IN SPOKANE

On September 3rd, IWW members Al Mangen, Bill Turnmire, and myself will go on trial in Spokane's federal court on charges relating to our June 27th arrest, along with 15 other protestors, during a demonstration against the Congressional passage of a hundred million dollars in aid to the fascist *contras* of Nicaragua.

The 15 other defendants entered pleas of "guilty" or "no contest" to charges of disobeying a federal marshal and creating a public disturbance. But Al, Bill, and I believed that the legal principle of "the necessity defense" might be worth forcing the Government to consider.

Briefly, this principle holds that committing a crime in the name of stopping a greater crime from occurring is justified. Certainly our efforts to block entry to and exit from the Spokane federal building were a lesser evil than the Reagan Administration's insistence on supporting the slaughter of innocent men, women, and children in Central America.

In a rather-ironic note, the necessity defense was used once before in connection with the IWW in one of the landmark cases of its applicability to US law. On September 13th, 1919 a posse of Arizona union-busters kidnapped a group of IWW organizers and sympathizers and hauled them across state lines in the name of protecting themselves from god only knows what kind of fantasized wrongs.

It would be nice if we evened the score this time out. But whether we do or not, we are proud to be affiliated both with the IWW and with efforts to help secure justice for our fellow workers in Nicaragua and the rest of Central America.

In Spokane, efforts continue to organize food-service workers, with two IWW members actively involved in on-the-job recruitment and direct action. In other news, three new members joined Spokane's growing IWW group and several interested visitors attended the August meeting, where the goal of achieving enough members to reach branch status was agreed on and all members pledged to continue active recruitment.

Terry Trueman

### FREE TRADE UNIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN EASTERN EUROPE

Whereas: Free trade unions and other political, social, religious, and cultural institutions created by people independent of State intervention or influence are the basic foundation upon which a free and non-exploitative society can be built; and

Whereas: The people in Communist Party-dominated Eastern European countries are struggling to build these institutions in the face of official and unofficial persecution and terror; and

Whereas: The dissident peace movements of Eastern Europe that call for co-operation with Western peace movements to establish a nuclear-free, neutral Central Europe offer a practical hope of avoiding a nuclear holocaust and building a free and peaceful Europe; therefore, be it

Resolved: That the IWW in general convention assembled pledge our full support to the free trade union Solidarity and the Freedom and Peace movement in Poland, the Charter 77 movement in Czechoslovakia, the Moscow Trust group in the Soviet Union, the Bulgarian CNT, and similar movements for a free society in other Communist Party-controlled countries; and be it further

Resolved: That we call upon all IWW members and others who support these principles to do all that they can to aid in the struggle of anti-capitalist Eastern European dissidents, by organizing support for political prisoners and such other means as may be appropriate.

### INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS AND SOLIDARITY

Resolved: That the IWW supports the seven-point program of the Haymarket International Labor Conference and will endeavor to implement those points dealing with improving communications between groups. The IWW, however, does not commit itself to hosting another international conference.

Resolved: That the IWW wishes to continue the current work on international solidarity and communications; and in order to further this goal, the Convention establishes a permanent committee on international communications and solidarity, instructing the General Executive Board to designate one of its members as a convener of this committee and call on interested members to serve.

### ASIAN LABOR SOLIDARITY

Resolved: That the GST send letters of support to the United Government Nurses' Union in Sri Lanka and the Textile, Garments, and Leather Workers' Federation of Thailand in support of their strikes of 7,000 nurses and 3,000 textile workers respectively, and letters of protest to their employers. We further call upon North American workers to boycott Adidas, Londonfox, and Puma garments until the strike in Thailand is resolved.

### SOUTH AFRICA

Resolved: That the IWW condemns the continuing repression directed against South African Workers—in particular against the Congress of South African Trade Unions and its activists—and urges transport and communications workers to ban all governmental and corporate traffic with South Africa. That \$200 of General Defense Committee funds be donated to COSATU to aid in defending class-war prisoners.

## CONVENTION.....

other causes. The Madison GMB reported that it now includes two IWW shops and sponsored a successful labor-history slide show to commemorate May Day.

After hearing a report from fellow workers at the People's Warehouse—a small operation organized into the IWW nearly four years ago whose management now seems intent on breaking the union—the Convention unanimously approved a resolution to help meet the expenses of the strike expected upon contract expiration this fall.

General Secretary-Treasurer Mark Kaufman reported that negotiations with Speedy Print have broken down and that the owner has refused the union's demand that he stop using the union label. Picketing and other actions are planned to force the owner to come to terms. Cellar negotiations are going well, and management has agreed to what we believe to be the first contract language in the US protecting AIDS victims from discrimination.

The management at the People's Warehouse—a small warehouse operation organized into the IWW nearly four years ago—has proved intransigent, however, hiring high-paid management consultants in an effort to break the union, undermine working conditions, and establish a two-tier wage scheme. Workers are standing firm, forcing management to retract many of its demands for concessions. But a strike remains likely when the contract expires this fall. The Convention unanimously decided to match the Job Branch's strike fund to assist these fellow workers in winning their struggle.

Much of the Convention's business was dedicated to considering appeals for solidarity and assistance from workers around the world, and to considering proposals for developing more-effective solidarity between revolutionary unions worldwide (and among workers in general). Several resolutions of solidarity were approved (printed in this issue). Delegates formally endorsed the Hormel boycott (and approved a donation to the Austin Emergency Appeal), and endorsed the recommendations of the Haymarket International Labor Conference hosted by the IWW last May.

In other business, delegates approved plans to computerize the IWW office—a move that should simplify record-keeping, mailings, and other office operations; directed the General Secretary-Treasurer to write the International Workers' Association protesting its affiliate's hostile actions against the IWW; and rejected a proposal to hold future IWW conventions in cities other than Chicago.

Especially controversial was a discussion of organizing prisoners. A number of Ohio prisoners have joined the IWW in the last year, and the Southwest Ohio General Membership Branch has argued that prisoner organizing should be a focus of the IWW's work. This issue led to heated debate, but in the end no decision was reached on the matter. A resolution from Michigan fellow workers to help establish an independent prisoners' union as a better means of meeting prisoner needs was defeated.

The Convention concluded with nominations for officers to serve in 1987 (with more candidates standing for nomination than the IWW has seen in many years), and a resolution of support for 1200 striking paperworkers from Rumford, Maine (see the September issue of the *IW* for a report on their strike against the Boise Cascade company), and adjourned Sunday afternoon with a rousing rendition of the Wobbly anthem, "Solidarity Forever."

JB

### WHY NOT TAKE A BUNDLE?

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## LOCAL P-9: A WOBBLY BEGINNING.....

Local P-9 is one of the oldest industrial union locals in the US. The Hormel plant in Austin, Minnesota was organized as an industrial union in 1933, four years before the CIO was formed.

On a wall in the Austin Labor Center (former union hall and strike center of P-9 before the UFCW put the local in trusteeship and locked the doors) hangs a picture with a brass plate beneath it which reads, "Frank Ellis, Founder of the Austin Labor Movement".

Frank Ellis got his first taste of union struggle as a young boy when he took part in a 1904 strike at the Swift plant in Saint Louis. After the strike he ran away from home and joined the newly-founded IWW. In those years most unions affiliated with the AFL were craft unions, organizing only skilled workers and ignoring the unskilled and semi-skilled, the bulk of production workers in industry. The idea of organizing whole industries appealed to Ellis, and as a Wobbly he became an effective on-the-job union organizer and a highly-skilled butcher in packinghouses across the Midwest.

For a while Ellis was president of an Amalgamated Meatcutters local at the Wilson plant in Oklahoma City, but he soon moved on. The Amalgamated was an AFL craft union, and Ellis had industrial unionism in his heart.

In 1928 Ellis, now in his 30s, was hired at the Austin Hormel plant to set up a casings-processing plant. As foreman on the job he was able to hire other union-conscious workers, some of them Wobblies. By July 1933 he had enough support to call a work stoppage in the hog kill. As a result, the Independent Union of All Workers (IUAW) was organized. Not only is the name of their local an offshoot of the IWW, but their union buttons were very similar to Wobbly buttons for four years, until they merged with the CIO in 1937.

In November 1933 the IUAW successfully organized the first major sit-down strike of the '30s. Jay Hormel, then president of the company, was escorted out of the plant by the workers, who occupied the plant for three days. During the strike Jay Hormel and Frank Ellis stood on tables outside the plant and debated the issues before the strikers. Hormel persuaded the Governor of Minnesota to mobilize the National Guard to break the strike, but then relented, saying that he didn't want bloodshed. Later he divulged the real reason: If the strikers had shut off the refrigeration, he would have lost several million dollars' worth of meat.

Hormel agreed to give the workers a 10% wage increase—not a bonanza, but the union was firmly established. By 1936 the union was in firm control over working conditions inside the plant. This was accomplished by several more sitdown stoppages in various departments at different times.

By 1940 the union had won some of the best contracts in the labor movement, and these held up till 1968. They had a guarantee of 52 straight-time flat-rate paychecks per year, regardless of hours worked, and a 52-week layoff notice was required. If a gang completed its quota of work early, its members could decide among themselves whether to go home early or continue to work and be paid extra money. The workers themselves collectively decided the pace of work or the speed of the line, and received extra pay for production over standard. The standards were set via negotiations between management and the workers directly involved.

The Austin Hormel Workers, thanks to the IWW influence on Frank Ellis, were the highest-paid workers in the packinghouse industry and worked the fewest hours. The old-timers testify that they worked hard but with dignity, since they set their own pace and took breaks when they needed them.

Ellis did not rest after organizing the Austin plant. The Austin IUAW immediately began organizing workers in restaurants, hotels, garages, retail stores, taverns, lumberyards, and many small factories in Austin and nearby Albert Lea. By 1940 Austin was a solid union town. The results of this are still obvious to anyone visiting Austin today. The town is clean and well kept, and I could find no poor section anywhere.

The Austin IUAW organizers also traveled to packing plants throughout Minnesota, the Dakotas, and Iowa. IUAW locals were organized as far north as Fargo, North Dakota and as far south as Ottumwa, Iowa.

Ellis also worked with some leaders of the Minneapolis Teamsters in regional organizing. One of them was Farrell Dobbs, who later wrote in his book *Teamster Power*: "The central leader of the IUAW was Frank Ellis, a man with considerable experience in the IWW, from which he had absorbed many class-struggle concepts. He was every inch a fighter. He did all he could to teach the workers that they must rely entirely on their own strength, never putting their trust in any agent of the capitalist class. Ellis warned especially against thinking the workers could get any justice in the capitalist courts."

With this heritage, is it any wonder that the workers in Austin are the first to take a strong stand against concessions? Any wonder that they are willing to battle the powerful UFCW to regain their autonomy and dignity? Any wonder that it is the retirees, the old-timers, who are in the thick of the P-9 support struggle?

In 1943 all CIO packinghouses were chartered as the United Packinghouse Workers of America (UPWA-CIO). Frank Ellis was elected vice-president of this union. In 1969 the UPWA merged with the Retail Clerks International Union and the old AFL United Meatcutters and Butcher Workers of America to form the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW). This sounded like a good deal at the time because it added 800,000 grocery-store employees, 250,000 poultry workers, and

150,000 other employees to the ranks of 100,000 meatpackers in theory. And this would have been the reality if not for one thing—a top-down bureaucratic structure.

Now that the meatpackers have discovered that this merger was a mistake, the Austin strikers are trying to re-form an independent union—the North American Meatpackers Union (NAMPU). The Austin strikers are leafletting meatpacker locals all over the US and Canada, and many are expressing an interest in breaking away from the UFCW and joining NAMPU. Only time will tell whether they will succeed in creating an independent union, and if so whether it will be a more-democratic union or just the same old barn with a new coat of paint.

The history of this local and the meetings that I have attended in Austin this year tell me it is possible; but democracy will return to the union movement only when the workers themselves demand nothing less. It will never be handed to them.

Gary Cox, X325428

## ONE CLASS! ONE ENEMY! National Guard suppresses P-9, January 1986.



## Bolivian State suppresses C.O.B., August 1986.

## DRUG-TESTING????????

After New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller's crusade against heroin and various crusades against LSD, it is difficult to write about US anti-drug efforts without cynicism. But it is not cynicism but good sense to be suspicious of an economic system as cannibalistic as capitalism. We all know about who the drug trade hurts and the alienation that sustains it—but who is benefitting from it?

The sale of illegal drugs in the US generates hundreds of millions each year. The question the boss press never raises is where this flood of money is going. It is known that without drug money most Miami banks would fold; so even if organized crime is taking the bulk of the profits, there are plenty of "straight" capitalists ready to launder the money for a cut. Besides, money in such amounts is ample to buy cops, lawyers, judges, and members of Congress; so at least for some elements of the powers-that-be, seriously curbing the drug trade would curb their incomes.

What then is the motive for the present Administration's anti-drug crusade, and what is its purpose? Before I begin, I must say it is thoughtful of President Reagan to suggest increasing the money available for anti-drug education. He cut very heavily from funds existing for that purpose in the early years of his administration, but that was before he decided to whip the issue up. The current federal anti-drug budget is \$1.3 billion a year, of which \$1 billion is for law enforcement. At this point, the feds spend more money educating people about the dangers of tobacco than about the dangers of narcotics.

By whipping up the drug issue right now, the Reagan Administration has connected with popular anxieties over a real problem, and so has generated a new wave of support for Presidential policies. This upsurge of support helps stave off pressure on the Administration to

cease balking on arms control: The anti-nuclear-testing-moratorium arguments that verifying Russian compliance would be impossible and that tests are necessary to assure the reliability of existing US nuclear weapons are not impressing large sectors of the public. Anything that takes people's minds off the nuclear debate is useful, and popular support on the drug issue may cushion protest against Reagan's next attack on Latin America, as well as help keep the US Senate Republican after this fall's elections.

The cocaine crusade has already served as a pretext to get US troops into Bolivia. Though Government officials admit that the operation resulted in no important arrests (no coca shrubs destroyed or finished cocaine seized), and US anti-drug workers say they do not expect it to have any effect on cocaine price or supply in the US, the operation was by no means a failure. The Bolivian Government was so happy to have the US Army as a backup in its anti-labor crackdown that it reportedly asked US forces to stay longer than the 60 days originally planned.

The other major US operation against drugs was the August 23rd blockage of New York City harbor. City officials admitted they had no evidence that drugs were being carried to Manhattan by small boats, and the search of 90 pleasure and fishing vessels failed to turn up any illegal drugs; but they defended the operation as a warning to possible future smugglers. This show of militance may well have been staged to divert public attention from the inadequacies of New York's drug-treatment centers, which are so overcrowded that people seeking help are turned away.

So if thus far the crusade has been stunts and gestures, what is its real meaning? Why is the employing class doing all this?

Because by whipping up public anxiety to a frenzy, the bosses can stampede people into accepting drug testing. It is the wide range of new powers drug testing gives bosses that is at the core of Reagan's proposals—not the desire to curb drug abuse. The same Research Triangle Institution that did the studies on the social costs of drug abuse cited by the Administration show that the social costs of alcohol are double those of illegal drugs. But alcohol doesn't have the same fear value.

So far 108 companies, or about 21% of the Fortune 500 roster, have drug-screening programs for prospective employers, and nearly half of the largest US corporations are expected to have screening within the year. Screening of currently-employed workers is already common in the Armed Forces, among professional athletes, and in certain local government organizations and programs like the Illinois Racing Board.

So far business unions have been slow to denounce the testing aspect of the anti-drug campaign, though in early August Robert Tobias, head of the National Employees' Union, criticized the President's "round-'em-up, head-'em-out cowboy-movie answers to real and complex problems". In New York, unions representing teachers and police have beaten employer demands for testing of current employees in the courts. In the case of the teachers told by their school district that they would not be considered for tenure unless they submitted urine samples for testing, the appellate-court judges pointed out that "strikingly absent from the record is even a scintilla of suspicion, much less reasonable suspicion" that the teachers were drug users. In the absence of any evidence whatever that the teachers were taking drugs, one may wonder why school-district officials ordered the testing. Were they simply caught up in the spirit of the times, or was the demand another attempt by the bosses to intimidate the workers?

The workers who have suffered most from the drug crusade are the air-traffic controllers. Of course, after the 1981 mass firing of PATCO strikers, air controllers are no longer union-represented, and this summer a series of plane crashes has brought the question of air safety to public attention. One of the issues in 1981 was that the air-traffic controllers felt overworked, and ever since the strike people have stressed that air-traffic control towers are understaffed. Yet rather than hire more controllers so they could work four six-hour shifts instead of the present three eight-hour shifts, the Government has chosen to start investigating the controllers for drug use.

★EDUCATION ★ORGANIZATION ★EMANCIPATION



AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL

ONE UNION ONE LABEL ONE ENEMY

## Industrial Worker

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In late August, 34 Palmdale, California controllers were re-assigned pending completion of an investigation into possible drug use, and 14 of them at first refused to submit to any testing. In a news conference held by the National Air Traffic Controllers' Association seeking the right to represent the 14,000 controllers, two NATCA members reported how aviation officials had told the controllers they would "be terminated for insubordination" if they refused to be tested—a report the aviation agency affirmed. One of the 34, Dennis Cottle, a NATCA member who was later returned to air duty, said officials were conducting a "witch hunt" that could ruin many careers.

As drug testing spreads, what is the chance of a prospective worker's being hired if he or she refuses testing? If current employees refuse the tests, will their refusal not become a permanent blot on their records? And if they take the tests, how accurate will the results be? If a test that is 99% accurate is used on a million people, 10,000 workers could be falsely accused of taking illegal drugs. After all, the President's much-touted urinalysis was taken two days early because he was scheduled to have a urological examination, and it was feared that an antibiotic might cause his urine to test positive.

What will happen to workers who have taken illegal drugs now that employers have been given a new role in overseeing their moral and legal standards? Persons who use drugs only occasionally can stay clear of them before job interviews and hope they won't be caught in a random check thereafter. Addicts can try various ploys to cheat on urine testing or bribe drugging test monitors. At present, federally-employed addicts have some protection under the Federal Rehabilitation Act as long as they do their work competently. Drug-treatment programs are long and costly, and 60% of all employees' insurance programs do not cover drug-abuse treatment. One way or another employers will fire anyone who tests positive. In this country there are some 20 million regular marijuana users, 5 million cocaine users, and half a million heroin addicts. Not all of these are employed by any means, but the firing of those who are would leave a sizable army of unemployed people without funds or medical insurance.

Meanwhile, the manufacturers of drug tests are gearing up for malignant growth (like cancer). Drug-test kits are already among the fastest-growing products for big pharmaceutical companies, and a number of others are scrambling to develop or market new products to cash in. Currently very few companies actually test urine samples for traces of drugs themselves, preferring to send the samples to private laboratories. Newcomers to the testing industry see the on-site market as an attractive place to gain a foothold, and will be out to sweeten their balance sheets by mounting advertising campaigns stressing the need for their products and overcoming any scruples an employer might have about forcing employees to prove their innocence.

plp

## Preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World

**THE WORKING CLASS AND THE EMPLOYING CLASS HAVE NOTHING IN COMMON! THERE CAN BE NO PEACE SO LONG AS HUNGER AND WANT ARE FOUND AMONG MILLIONS OF WORKING PEOPLE AND THE FEW, WHO MAKE UP THE EMPLOYING CLASS, HAVE ALL THE GOOD THINGS OF LIFE.**

**BETWEEN THESE TWO CLASSES A STRUGGLE MUST GO ON UNTIL THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD ORGANIZE AS A CLASS, TAKE POSSESSION OF THE EARTH AND THE MACHINERY OF PRODUCTION, AND ABOLISH THE WAGE SYSTEM.**

**WE FIND THAT THE CENTERING OF THE MANAGEMENT OF INDUSTRIES INTO FEWER AND FEWER HANDS MAKES THE TRADE UNIONS UNABLE TO COPE WITH THE EVER GROWING POWER OF THE EMPLOYING CLASS. THE TRADE UNIONS FOSTER A STATE OF AFFAIRS WHICH ALLOWS ONE SET OF WORKERS TO BE PITTED AGAINST ANOTHER SET OF WORKERS IN THE SAME INDUSTRY, THEREBY HELPING DEFEAT ONE ANOTHER IN WAGE WARS. MOREOVER, THE TRADE UNIONS AID THE EMPLOYING CLASS TO MISLEAD THE WORKERS INTO THE BELIEF THAT THE WORKING CLASS HAVE INTERESTS IN COMMON WITH THEIR EMPLOYERS.**

**THESE CONDITIONS CAN BE CHANGED AND THE INTEREST OF THE WORKING CLASS UPHOLD ONLY BY AN ORGANIZATION FORMED IN SUCH A WAY THAT ALL ITS MEMBERS IN ANY ONE INDUSTRY, OR IN ALL INDUSTRIES IF NECESSARY, CEASE WORK WHENEVER A STRIKE OR LOCKOUT IS ON IN ANY DEPARTMENT THEREOF, THUS MAKING AN INJURY TO ONE AN INJURY TO ALL.**

**INSTEAD OF THE CONSERVATIVE MOTTO, "A FAIR DAY'S WAGE FOR FAIR DAY'S WORK," WE MUST INSCRIBE ON OUR BANNER THE REVOLUTIONARY WATCHWORD, "ABOLITION OF THE WAGE SYSTEM."**

**IT IS THE HISTORIC MISSION OF THE WORKING CLASS TO DO AWAY WITH CAPITALISM. THE ARMY OF PRODUCTION MUST BE ORGANIZED, NOT ONLY FOR THE EVERY-DAY STRUGGLE WITH CAPITALISTS, BUT ALSO TO CARRY ON PRODUCTION WHEN CAPITALISM SHALL HAVE BEEN OVERTHROWN. BY ORGANIZING INDUSTRIALLY WE ARE FORMING THE STRUCTURE OF THE NEW SOCIETY WITHIN THE SHELL OF THE OLD.**

## .....U.S. JOBLESS FIGURES LIE!.....

Many economists and workplace experts (to say nothing of the *IW* staff) are dissatisfied with the way the US Government measures trends in employment.

The unemployment rate, determined in a monthly survey of 59,000 households by the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), once was the pivotal indicator of job needs and social distress. Now, some experts say, the Bureau's other major monthly survey, based on business payroll records, provides a more useful yardstick.

On Labor Day 1979, a bipartisan national commission made recommendations to the Bureau for improved statistics on blacks and other minorities and for improved data and local statistics. At that time the commission wanted to increase the household survey base to 90,000 occupied households, which would have cost \$20 million a year and was rejected by the Department of Labor, of which the BLS is a part. Because of budgetary restraints

## PICTURE GARY, INDIANA.....

Between the shores of Lake Michigan and the City of Gary, Indiana, are the massive, rusting hulks of steel plants and related industrial facilities. Most of the plants are closed. Many will never open again. In the City itself, Broadway—the main drag—is a straight line of boarded-up storefronts and closed-up commercial buildings in a state of near total disrepair. The dinginess and dilapidation are punctuated by fast-food outlets, discount stores, apostolic church storefronts and liquor stores. God and alcohol come cheap.

The grandiose civic buildings and a few large hotels at the northern base of the street, near the plants, are so grimy they appear to be as abandoned as the rest of Broadway, which extends straight south over the flat terrain into a horizonless distance of seemingly endless desolation. The air reeks of various gases.



To either side of Broadway, within walking distance of the plants, are the residential neighborhoods which house(d) steelworkers. Not a block has been spared by the collapse of the local economy. Some blocks are totally abandoned—houses left open and falling in, boarded-up and weather-beaten, or gutted by fire. Here and there a substantial home maintains a semblance of the prosperity which has been visibly banished from the lives of the people of Gary.

Like Gary's northern limit, with its gigantic dead industrial plants and its core of vanished businesses and dead or dying habitations, the City's periphery is a shambles of caved-in machine shops, garages and other extinct small concerns of early- and mid-20th Century American industrialism. Gary looks like a city struck by a plague, where only a rat should smile, and yet...



(every nickel was being funneled to the Military, and the Department of Labor is the bottom priority), few of the commission's recommendations were adopted. In 1982, the Government reduced the household sample from 65,000 occupied households to 59,000, the number currently being surveyed. The payroll survey, however, is now based on a sample of 250,000 businesses, up from about 210,000 in 1985.

In June, the two surveys made by the BLS showed a major discrepancy. The household survey listed some 111,353,000 persons as employed, including Military members, a gain of 556,000 from May. The payroll survey listed 99,819,000 as employed, a decline of 89,000 from May. Bureau officials said strikes were a major reason for the difference: The household survey views strikers as employed, even though they are not at work. The payroll survey considers them jobless.

For June the BLS came up with a figure of 8,443,000 unemployed, for an unemployment rate of 7%, based on a labor force that includes military personnel stationed in the US. Some critics claim the unemployment rate would be at least twice as high if it included measurements for workers who have become discouraged about finding a job and have stopped seeking employment, and for workers forced to work part-time because full-time work was not available. The first are not reflected in the survey at all; the second are counted as employed.

Using measurements for these categories, researchers for the Council on International and Public Affairs have



The people in the streets, who are mostly Black, are friendly and casual; they go on with their lives in a city Big Steel has unmade. And they do it with a human face.

McBride Hall, the headquarters of United Steelworkers of America Local 1014, is off to the southeast of the City, beyond some empty land and scrub copses of trees and brush. It is on Texas Street, across the way from a trucking company's loading docks, in an area of gas stations, electrical outfits and other appendages of internal combustion civilization. It is a rather large building, two- or three-storied—about as large as a hospital in a medium-sized city—and faced with a brown stone of slightly reddish hue. Backed by a freeway, it rises from a low mound, tilting back somewhat, and is fronted by an enormous parking lot made phenomenal, today, by the fact that there are four cars parked in it. Although more horizontal than vertical in mass, it reminds one of the pylon of the Temple of Karnak. Vast and technocratic, it looms over its uninhabited terrain with a gloomy sense of endurance and purpose. It will take some time to erode.



Here, too, the flat sky of a cloudless day at the edge of the plains stinks of fumes cast off from the plumes of smoke rising mile-high over the Lake. Should you take the train from Chicago through Kalamazoo to Detroit and Toledo you will pass through Gary, within a stone's throw of the vast, rust walls of the fortresses, the smokestacks, the empty asphalt approaches, the intricate tubing of indecipherable engines, and see not a soul. To the south is the burning City I have seen, turned Black.

arrived at what they call a "jobless rate", which for 1985 they place at 14.3%, or 16,320,000. For June 1986, the jobless rate was 14.5%, or 17,200,000. The Council points out that a "bipartisan political interest" exists in moderating bad news, and that several changes in measurements (such as counting military personnel as employed) have operated to make unemployment seem lower on the charts. Adding in the Military has the effect of reducing the unemployment rate about .1% each month.

Critics of BLS statistics also say the official rate does not adequately measure unemployment among blacks and many other urban residents and does not measure economic distress in rural areas.

Counting inner-city unemployed (particularly black youths and black men) plus others in distress (like the homeless, migrant workers, and undocumented workers) is particularly difficult, as many distrust (for good reason) anyone who might be connected with the Immigration Service. Nevertheless, in January the US Conference of Mayors said that in 22 of 25 cities surveyed, the official unemployment rate computed by the BLS was less than what city officials believed to be the correct rate.

A study of eight farming counties in South Central Iowa by Peter Korsching, associate professor of sociology at Iowa State University, indicated an unemployment rate of 6.5%. And a survey in rural areas of Florida turned up similar understatement of unemployment. The only difference between Korsching's surveys and the BLS's was (continued on Page 8)





## Left Side

Here in Freedomland, the term "melting pot" means that anyone who is not willing to melt into fundamentalist suburbanism can well expect to be pushed out of the picture entirely. Especially if your ancestors happened to be the first ones here.

The original "Americans" living along the Columbia River, who are fighting to hold on to a few acres of river shore, are just another group of great hosts of 200 years of victimization. Some small bands of the Klikitat and Yakima Nations still have small settlements along the Columbia River, where they subsist by salmon fishing, as did their ancestors for over 12,000 years.

These people, who once had stewardship over the entire river basin, have a culture that is deeply rooted in salmon fishing: a well-organized communal society that existed when European America's ancestors were still living in the Stone Age, and continued through the years when Europeans were slaughtering each other over the proper manner of worshipping their Prince of Peace to the present day, when they are facing the greatest crisis in a dozen millennia.

The Government is now doing its best to take away the last few acres they have as well as their means of economic survival. While in Arizona the Government is pimping for the uranium and coal-mining interests at Big Mountain, at the Columbia River it is pimping for the sports-fishing and tourism industries. In recent decades many of the fishing villages have been flooded with the building of the Bonneville Dam and other "water control" projects. At the time of the flooding, the Government promised to build new villages for these people, a promise which needless to say was as hollow as all the other promises made over the last 210 years to those of Western Hemisphere heritage.

Not only has their flooded housing not been replaced, but the benevolent demockery is now trying to evict them from their last bit of land. As the Klikitat Chief said of the Government: "They never fulfilled their promise; there is still land they owe us for the villages they flooded out!"

The treaty to which the Chief was referring had the usual flowery language found in government documents dealing with Indians, guaranteeing that they "... can fish as long as the Sun shines, as long as the mountains stand, and as long as the rivers run." For the Klikitat and the Yakima, however, the Sun is beginning to grow dim, the mountains are getting harder to see, and the rivers are running with more and more pollution and fewer and fewer fish. Through government and corporate bungling the salmon have been disappearing from the Columbia River at an alarming rate. The sports fishermen have become upset, and the Indians have become a convenient scapegoat for government and corporate agencies that infer that the salmon are disappearing because of "Indian poachers".

Only one who is woefully misinformed could be persuaded to believe that a people who have evolved a culture and economy based on salmon over thousands of years would suddenly decide to commit self-ethnocide.

This is not a blanket condemnation of technological progress, as there are no people in the history of the human race who have rejected means to make life a little easier for themselves. However technology of any type benefits only those who own and control it. The collective possession and utilization of advanced technology by all those affected by it would ensure that technology would be used to benefit present and succeeding generations. When the Indians expressed their belief in providing for "the sixth generation after", it was not poetic idealism but hard reality. This planet of ours is good for at least another billion years, and no matter what happens there will be some forms of life on it. The question remaining is whether we will be one of those life forms.

The Europeans who first came to the Great Plains deservingly referred to the Sioux as "savages", not knowing that the Sioux had an even more-descriptive term for them that translated "those who mistreat their own children".

C. C. Redcloud

### GIVE TO THE SUSTAINING FUND

#### CALIFORNIA WINERY WORKERS STRIKE

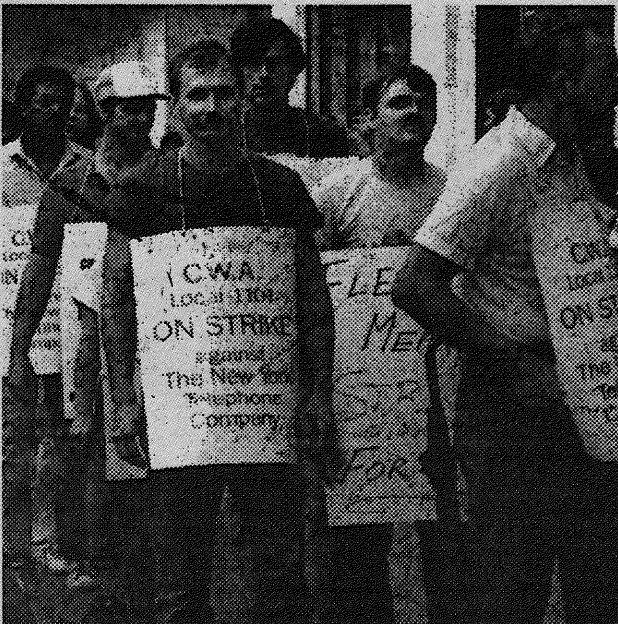
On August 27th, Local 186 representatives of the Winery, Distillery, and Allied Workers Union dismissed their company's last demand as an "insult". Some 2,000 workers in a dozen wineries walked out and joined harvest-time strikes of three other large wineries: the Christian Brothers plants in Napa Valley and Reedley, the Franzia Winery in Ripon, and the Vie-Del Company's plants in Fresno and Kingsburg. The 12 wineries struck by Local 186 produce about half of California's wine—a 5.5-billion-dollar industry that sells close to 70% of the wine marketed in this country. The strikes were timed to hit as the new harvest approached, the busiest time of the year for the wine industry.

## NORTH AMERICAN LABOR NEWS.....

### "BABY BELL" PHONE WORKERS STRIKE

Nearly 70,000 communications workers struck three telephone companies at 12:01 am August 10th in the industry's second major contract dispute since the breakup of the Bell System in 1984. The Communications Workers of America had reached settlements just the week before with two of the seven regional phone companies (BellSouth, with 63,000 union workers, and Pacific Telesis, with 44,000 employees in California and Nevada), and reached agreements before the strike deadline with Pacific Northwest Bell. Reportedly, the Bell South workers won a 10% wage increase over the life of a three-year contract; Pacific Telesis workers settled for a 6% raise over three years with bonuses that could theoretically increase their total compensation gain to 12%; and 9500 Pacific Northwest Bell workers won a 13.3% increase.

The CWA called for strikes against Michigan Bell, NY-nex (New York and New England), and two major sub-



sidiaries of US West: Northwestern Bell in the Midwest and Mountain Bell in the Rockies. The strikes by operators, installers, maintenance and clerical workers, and other personnel came in contract disputes over wages and cost-of-living increases, health plans, job security, and other issues.

Repairs and new installations were disrupted, but with equipment automated and 12,000 supervisors scabbing on the strikers it would seem that the workers had little pressure. Nevertheless, the pickets were undeterred.

"We won't go back until we get what we want," said service clerk Al Hasim as he walked a picket line outside a New York Telephone Company office in mid-town Manhattan. "They're making money. You just have to look at their stocks."

On August 18th, New York and New England telephone workers agreed on a tentative contract and returned to work.

About 155,000 CWA workers staged a 26-day strike against AT&T's long-lines operations in June and won a 10.2% three-year wage-and-benefit package.

### HOUSTON GARBAGE COLLECTORS WILDCAT

On Monday, August 18th, almost all Houston garbage collectors called in sick. It was the start of a three-day wildcat strike protesting an August 1st pay cut and lay-off of 159 workers, which meant a 20% lengthening of routes for the 900 remaining. By the third day, however, 115 of the 132 garbage trucks were on the street, each escorted by a cop car in response to alleged threats by strikers. On Thursday almost all of the city's garbage collectors returned to work, including some dismissed earlier in the strike for reporting to work but staging an informal sitdown. The dismissal of the 91 who had refused to work was re-affirmed. "They're no longer employed by the City of Houston," said a spokesperson for the Mayor.

### BOSS KILLS TWO, GOES FREE

Two shipyard workers at San Diego's National Steel and Shipbuilding Company were killed on the job in early August. Vice-president (for corporate relations) Fred Hallett was quick to explain in the wake of the first death that "NASSCO has a good safety record. This kind of accident is very rare." That will doubtless be an enormous comfort to the dead men's widows, children, and co-workers.

Guillermo Prado was killed on Tuesday, August 5th, when a two-by-four board fell from a bundle being lifted by a crane, going through his hard hat. Prado, who had worked at the shipyard 10 years, had been dis-assembling scaffolding inside a storage tank aboard the tanker *Exxon Valdez* when he was killed by NASSCO's shoddy safety practices.

Two days later Tom Tweedie, a 29-year-old journeyman electrical specialist, was electrocuted while working on the same thousand-foot oil tanker. The union has requested an investigation into the deaths by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

On September 2nd, 1980, two NASSCO workers suf-

focated aboard the destroyer tender *Cape Cod* when the compartment they were working in filled with argon gas. That incident prompted a wildcat strike, and a company agent and police provocateur succeeded in drawing three militant workers into a plot to bomb the company. The Ironworkers placed the NASSCO union local in receivership following the strike—removing officials who had supported it. The three workers—arrested after they had reconsidered the bombing plot and were attempting to dispose of the bomb—were sent to prison for long terms despite a vigorous defense effort.

NASSCO is owned by the multi-national Morrison-Knudsen Company—a construction conglomerate based in Boise, Idaho—and is the largest shipbuilder on the West Coast, employing some 3800 workers. Though the Company likes to boast of its safety records, workers tell a different story.

San Diego's welding schools place scores of welders each year at the giant shipyard, but few last more than a year or two before being forced to quit by illness. The NASSCO unions have traditionally ignored the miserable health and safety conditions at the shipyard, except for the few months when the ironworkers' local was captured by insurgents.

The local papers referred to the deaths as "accidents" (the *San Diego Union* didn't even mention the second), but they're nothing of the kind. Fellow Workers Prado and Tweedie were murdered by their bosses for the lowest of all possible motives—the desire to turn a buck.

It's time we organize to put an end to this rotten system, which cares less for our lives than for the rate of return on invested capital.

JB

### INTEL SCREWS WORKERS

In early August, the Intel Corporation, a semiconductor manufacturer based in Santa Clara, California, announced plans to shut down its Barbados plant, laying off 900 employees over the next several months, and to lay off 420 Puerto Rican employees by the year-end. The company's chairperson and chief executive, Gordon Moore, said a variety of short-term measures to balance capacity and demand—such as shorter workweeks and temporary plant shutdowns—had not been adequate. He said the company had doubled its productivity per worker during the last year, and expected to double it again in the coming year, leaving it with substantial overcapacity. While there are tax benefits derived from operating in the Caribbean, one analyst pointed out, these are more than offset by lower labor costs in the Far East.

The phrase "doubled its productivity per worker" sounds ominous for good reason, hinting at speedups and worker-safety cuts not mentioned in the *New York Times* source article. Possibly the workers in Barbados and Puerto Rico also took a pay cut, in a vain attempt to keep their jobs. But as long as multinational corporations are free to open and shut plants as they will, no worker's job in any country will be safe.

### DISSENSION EVEN IN RAIL UNION

For the first time in the history of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, a sitting president failed to be re-elected. The union holds a convention every five years, and the delegates elect a president who serves till the next election. This August Robert Delaney defeated John Sytsma 371 to 301; in Sytsma's first two terms he had won unanimously, without opposition. More important than the change of faces at the top, however, was the agitation for direct election of the union's officers by the membership, and the passage of a resolution cutting the president's salary from \$145,000 to \$100,000. The best-paid engineer in the union makes \$65,000.

## didyounotice?didyounoti

**TEACHERS STRIKE IN SEVEN STATES:** Teachers in Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island were on strike the day after Labor Day, seeking higher wages, improved benefits, and in one case a contract.

**ROBOTICS WORKERS LAID OFF:** In mid-August, battered by cutbacks at the General Motors Corporation, the GMFanuc Robotics Corporation, the leading US robot supplier, announced that it was laying off 200 of its 690 employees.

**WHO WORKS WHERE?** Of the 109 million Americans employed in 1986, over 13 million are engaged in precision production, craft, and repair operations, popularly thought of as the province of skilled blue-collar workers, and 17 million are operators, fabricators, and laborers, comprising semi-skilled and unskilled blue-collar workers. Managerial, professional, and technical workers total 29.3 million, wholesale and retail trade workers total 24 million, and service-industry workers total 23 million.

**TEAMSTER LOCAL 705, CHICAGO,** used to have 26,000 truck drivers. Now it's down to 16,300, with many of its lost members driving now for \$5 or \$6 an hour—which it blames on de-regulation.



# INTERNATIONAL LABOR NEWS.....

## SPANISH DOCKERS CONTINUE FIGHT

Following a tense July, new struggles broke out on Spanish docks in August due to the Government's continuing attacks on portworkers.

On August 1st around a thousand longshoremen were laid off from the OTP (the Government-operated portworkers' employment agency) and forced to enroll in private firms, whereupon Coordinadora responded by demanding that these firms return the workers to the OTP. This resulted in a low turnout of workers for the private firms. On the 4th the Government authorized private firms faced with such a low turnout to apply to the regular unemployment office for workers.

On August 5th Contenemar, a stevedoring company in Barcelona which was struck in 1981 because of its refusal to sign the collective agreement, dismissed registered dockers and hired scabs. The rest of the workers in the port stopped work and demonstrated inside the Contenemar terminal. About 500 workers were involved in the protest. Police attempted to enter the terminal, but were repelled by strikers. One docker was wounded, as was one cop, and another cop lost his pistol. Truck drivers showed solidarity by refusing to move goods unloaded by the scabs.

Other actions were taken against Contenemar over the next few days in Alicante, Valencia, and Bilbao (where dismissed dockers refused to leave their posts and staged a work-in). On the 8th disciplinary proceedings were begun against the 500 dockers who had shut down the Barcelona terminal on the 5th. "Transtainer" drivers were given 30-day suspensions from duty.

On the 11th Coordinadora issued a call for strike action against Contenemar throughout Spain to begin on August 25th. The outcome of this fight is unknown as we go to press (September 7th).

## ASIAN WORKERS APPEAL FOR SOLIDARITY

The Asian Workers' Solidarity Link (c/o Sahabat Alam Malaysia, 37 Birch Lane, Penang, Malaysia) is calling on workers in the West to extend solidarity to two long and difficult struggles.

The first involves 7,000 nurses from 312 hospitals in Sri Lanka who have been on strike in a wage dispute. The Government has proscribed the nurses' union and evicted the strikers from their homes.

The AWSL asks that letters of protest be sent to the Honorable Minister of Health, Ministry of Health, Inland Revenue Department Building, Colombo 02, Sri Lanka, and to His Excellency, the President of the Socialistic Democratic Republic of Sri Lanka, Janadhipathy Mawatha, Colombo, Sri Lanka. Letters of solidarity and copies of protests should be sent to the Secretary General, Public Services United Nurses' Union, 530 Thibirigunyaya Road, Colombo 05, Sri Lanka.

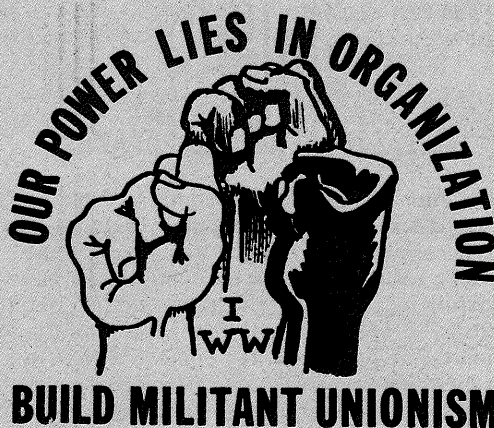
The second struggle involves 3,000 women garment workers at two factories, Thai Iryo Ltd and Thai Iryo Garments Ltd. The struggle began in March when workers demanded better wages, improved working conditions, and permanent employment. The workers were earning \$1.50 per day (US) and working under individual

contracts lasting a year.

On March 6th 87 workers were fired from Thai Iryo Garments when the workers issued their demands. On the 17th the workers withdrew all demands except the demand for permanent employment. But the company remained intransigent, and 900 workers from Thai Iryo Garments struck on the 21st, to be joined later by the 2600 workers from Thai Iryo Ltd.

Letters of protest, pressing for a settlement, should be sent to the Prime Minister, the Honorable Prem Tinsulanond, Government House, Nakorn Phatom Road, Bangkok 10300, Thailand, and to General Sithi Chiraroj, Ministry of the Interior, Assadang Road, Bangkok 10200, Thailand. Letters of solidarity should be sent to the Secretary, Textile, Garments, and Leather Workers' Federation of Thailand, 44139 Prachachuen Road, Bangsue, Dusit, Bangkok 10800, Thailand.

In addition, don't buy Adidas, Londonfox, or Puma products. And don't forget to send copies of letters and information about other actions to the Asian Workers' Solidarity Link.



## SOLIDARNOSC ACTIVIST FREED

On August 11th, Solidarnosc theoretician and activist Adam Michnik was released from prison under a limited amnesty. His release came 10 days after that of Bogdan Lis, who was one of Michnik's two co-defendants in a trial 18 months ago for planning a strike that was later called off. The third defendant, Wladyslaw Frasyniuk, who received the stiffest sentence (three and a half years), is being treated as a repeating political offender and is thus ineligible for the offered clemency. Michnik and Lis each spent several years in detention, but until their trial had not been convicted of anything.

Michnik, one of the founders of the Workers' Defense Committee, wrote several books while in prison, one of which, *Letters From Prison*, has since been published in English.

**TWO-DAY STRIKE IN CHILE:** On September 4th, truckloads of soldiers in battle dress took to the streets of the Chilean capital at the outset of a two-day work stoppage called by the Communist Party. At noon a few hundred people tried to march into the downtown Plaza de Armas singing the national anthem, but were attacked by police using tear gas and water cannons.

various unions called upon to support them cross picket lines daily to deliver newsprint and transport printed papers. In Brighton I stood outside the conference hall among shouting printers and barked out my insults at Hammond as he walked past us with a contemptuous smile.

Over the years one has come to accept the resolutions and cries of anguish of delegates as an established ritual, designed for retelling the boys and girls back home the "and I told the conference" yarns. This conference voted, in line with the Labour Party, for a minimum wage of 80 pounds a week (one pound equals \$1.49) for 8,000,000 low-paid workers. And Hammond stood at the rostrum, to catcalls and boos, and gave the resolution the right-wing raspberry; for Hammond and the closed-shop craft unions follow the American pattern of working with the bosses and sharing the loot.

Legally or not, employers will still find a hundred ways to underpay unskilled workers; and only the unity of fellow workers can help other workers in trouble. Why should well-paid, skilled workers with their cozy union cards have to worry about sweatshop workers? Why indeed, comrade? It was low-paid, ill-treated workers who were imprisoned, beaten, and killed who created the unions. It is fitting that right-wing trade unionism should reject the ill-paid in the whiteness of Brighton.

Arthur Scargill, the miners' delegate, watched as the resolution for the complete banning of nuclear power plants was defeated at the behest of TUC General Secretary Norman Willis. After the Chernobyl disaster, the call to ban all future nuclear power stations was like a pint of beer on a hot day, but the power-plant workers are lining up to save the nuclear industry. In the end, comrades, it's a fight to save jobs. And with 4,000,000 unemployed, brotherly love is strictly for the birds.

Let us sit on the cold pebbles of Brighton Beach and sing sad songs for the union. The right wing have won this day, since they have defeated Scargill and his miners' union in the fight to ban nuclear power. The conference majority vote was for "the long-term phasing out of nuclear power and a review of the situation".

Arthur Moyse, London

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10¢ each; bulk rate 40%, prepaid, from San Francisco IWW, P.O. Box 40485, San Francisco, California 94140.
- ☐ Solidarity Bulletin (*monthly publication*)  
\$10 a year from Vancouver IWW, P.O. Box 34334, Station D., Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6J 4P3.
- ☐ IWW baseball caps (*one size fits all*)  
\$4 each plus \$1 each for shipping from University Cellar IU 660 Job Branch (checks payable to IWW), 341 East Liberty, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48107.
- ☐ Amnesty for British Miners (*enamel and gold buttons*)  
\$10 each from Chicago IWW Branch, 3435 North Sheffield, Suite 202, Chicago, IL 60657. (All proceeds to British miners.)

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## \* \* \* sound of a \* \* \* distant drum

Brighton has all the resistible charm of a petit-bourgeois resort town. The Edwardian buildings, painted a bleach white, give the seafront the air of a newly-painted channel house. For Londoners it is London-by-the-Sea, as it's only a one-hour train trip to the pebbled coastline—an escape to a more-exhilarating view than the other side of a crowded street. The "rude" postcards, the beer, the fish and chips, the giggles of "naughty weekends", the occasional decapitated body discovered in a railway trunk, are among the things that give Brighton its peculiar charm. Even Mrs. Thatcher, Her Majesty's First Minister, had her hotel-bombing in Brighton.

One could have trade-union conferences in raucous, beery Blackpool, but that would give the affair an air of proletarian heartiness that Britain's political middle class are desperately trying to throw off, in the style of the European short-change artist Mitterand across the Channel.

With the white-collar unions and craft unions cohesing like shit in a sewer, there are now secret talks (known only to me and 10 million others) about forming a new right-wing union. This idea was first broached by the late unlamented Terry Duffy, who ran the engineering workers' union. Now there is talk of a right-wing craft union (1,800,000 strong) to break the power of the all-purpose Transport and General Workers' Union. Various craft unions are trying to work up courage to move in; like the scab union in the coal fields, they will attract those with clean fingernails once they feel that the State and the bosses approve.

The mouthpiece for the new move is Eric Hammond, whose electricians' union moved into Fortress Wapping to press the buttons of the high technology now printing millions of scab newspapers. Over 5,000 print workers lost their jobs when the electricians took over production. Month by month they staff their picket line, while



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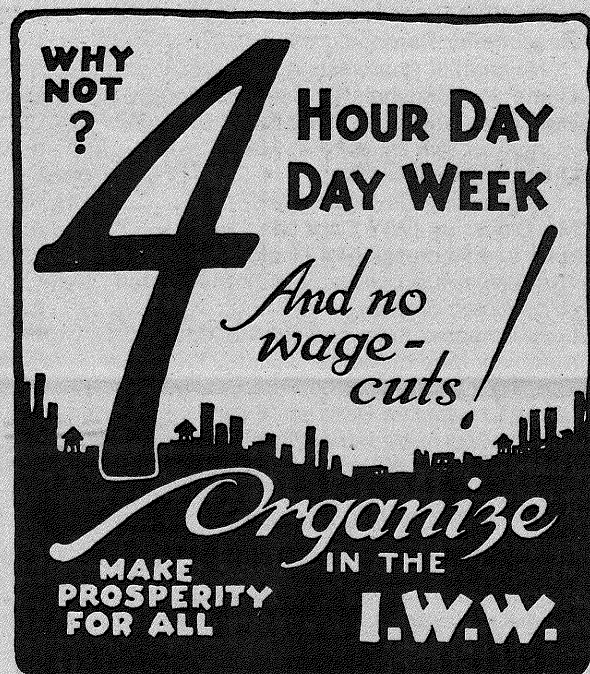
**POOR, SICK, AND UNINSURED:** In the last five years, the number of Americans unable to afford medical care has grown from 25 million to 37 million. According to a recent study by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, a million Americans are refused medical treatment each year because they can't pay, and five million others don't even seek help they need. Some 75% of the uninsured have jobs.

**DRUG OF CHOICE:** During the Vietnam era, the CIA was up to its elbows in the opium trade. Now that the scene has shifted to Latin America, the "Company" is up to its nose in cocaine dealing.

**OUT OF SIGHT . . .** "By and large, they're right—from their point of view," points out Desmond Tutu about the drastic clampdown the Botha Government has inflicted on the South African press. "The purpose of the regulations is to prevent the white community from knowing what's going on. If they did know, they'd panic; but they don't really want to know anyway. They never did."

**ANATOLE FRANCE:** "The law in its majestic equality forbids both the rich and the poor to sleep under bridges."

**SMALL-COMFORT DEPARTMENT:** Publishers' notions of economic prudence guard the US from foreign opinions even more efficiently than the McCarran-Walter Act. Not one to leave everything to the economy, however, the Reagan Administration has been stepping up harassment of people returning from Nicaraguan visits. Customs and FBI officers are increasingly examining and confiscating papers and books carried by the returnees, and copying their address books and any letters they may be carrying.



**THE MORE THINGS CHANGE:** Community groups in the racially-integrated Chicago suburb of Wrightwood are dragging several local realtors into court over "panic peddling". Seems the real-estate people were calling up home owners and telling them that their neighborhood was about to "change" (Chicagoese for become black), that the value of their homes was going to drop to almost nothing, and that their only hope was to sell now. It's been 20 years since realtors have felt the climate was right to try anything that blatant, but at the rate we are retrogressing, we'll be back to lynch mobs in a few years.

**'WHERE THE MONEY WENT:** According to a report by Citizens for Tax Justice, there seems to be an inverse relationship between companies maximizing tax breaks and companies making new investments in plants and employment. Between 1981, when Reaganism took the glove off the market's invisible hand, and 1984, some 44 companies shared \$2.1 billion in tax-rebate money, declared \$53.6 billion in pre-tax profits, and paid no taxes at all. Over the same period these same 44 companies reduced their aggregate capital spending by 4% and their labor forces by 6%. For example, Boeing paid no taxes, cut its capital spending by 38%, and reduced its payroll by 18%. Dow let its investment decline by 34% and its workforce by 13%; IT&T by 30% and 25%. So where did the money go? These same 44 corporations raised dividends an average of 22% and raised chief executive officers' salaries an average of 54%.

**PREGNANCY LEAVE?** Only 40% of US working women are eligible for short-term, unpaid pregnancy leave. The rest depend on vacations and sick leave, or risk losing their jobs.

### US WHITES 12 TIMES WEALTHIER THAN US BLACKS

White Americans, whose incomes are almost twice those of blacks, have accumulated 12 times as much wealth, according to a Census Bureau study which found that nearly a third of black households have no wealth at all. While income levels have been studied frequently, the Census Bureau study, the first of its kind the agency has undertaken, provides a comprehensive look at family wealth by adding up the value of savings, housing, cars, stocks, and the like, and subtracting debts. (The assets did not cover home furniture, pension rights, the cash value of life-insurance policies, or accumulated Social Security benefits.)

Based on a sampling of 20,000 households, the Bureau found that the median net worth of households in 1984 was \$39,135 for whites, \$4,913 for Hispanics, and \$3,397 for blacks. Out of 9.5 million black households, 30.5% had either zero or negative net worth. Out of 4.2 million Hispanic households, 23.9% had zero or negative net worth. Out of 75.3 million white households, 8.4% had zero or negative net worth.

At the other extreme, 26.2% of white households had a median net worth exceeding \$100,000, compared with 3.9% of black households and 8.2% of Hispanic. Not unexpectedly, the Census Bureau data show that affluent people own a large proportion of total assets, and an even larger proportion of selected forms of assets. For example, households with incomes of at least \$48,000 accounted for 12% of the country's 86,790 households, had a median net worth of \$123,474, and held 38% of the nation's total family net worth. Those 12%, however, held 63% of the value of stocks and mutual-fund shares.

The 22.3 million households with earnings of less than \$10,800 had a median net worth of only \$5,080 and accounted for only 9.7% of total family net worth.

### FAREWELL FELLOW WORKER

Florence Reece, author of "Which Side Are You On?", died August 3rd in Knoxville, Tennessee. She began writing songs in the 1930s to describe the plight of the mine workers in Harlan County, Kentucky, and also wrote a book of poems and short stories, *Against the Current*. One of her latest poems, "You Can't Live off Jellybeans", was written in 1981 to criticize the Reagan Administration cuts in social programs.



### RENT STRIKE IN SOUTH AFRICA

On September 4th, 1984 a rent boycott was called in Sharpeville, South Africa, a township 40 miles south of Johannesburg. From one locality the idea spread through black townships until, in August 1986, the Community Research Group at Witwatersrand University estimated that as many as 300,000 black households were withholding rents. This summer black police began a wave of evictions of rent boycotters.

This boycott began in 1984 when the white authorities handed over token responsibility for administration of black townships to black councils. These new black councils, denounced by anti-apartheid activists as collaborators, needed revenue to provide services and facilities in the townships in order to give themselves some appearance of legitimacy. But the only way they could increase revenue was to increase rents, destroying the credibility they sought to establish.

## FREE SOUTH AFRICAN DETAINEES! JOBLESS.....

that Korsching and his associates asked the people they interviewed if they considered themselves unemployed and would like a job if one were offered.

Government enumerators never ask people whether they are unemployed, but rather how many hours they have worked in a given week. The BLS lists as employed any person who worked more than one hour a week for wages, or who worked more than 15 hours, paid or unpaid, in a family enterprise. Persons are counted as unemployed if they had no employment during the survey week, if they had sought work (either by telephone or in person) in the previous four weeks, and if they would accept employment if it were offered.

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